

# QUOTES



Galileo Galilei

You cannot teach a man anything, you can only help him find it within himself.”

A few centuries later we find these statements from some of the most important people in the worlds of philosophy, politics and education:

**THE TEACHER AS A NECESSARY EVIL.** Let us have as few people as possible between the productive minds and the hungry and recipient minds! The middlemen almost unconsciously adulterate the food which they supply. It is because of teachers that so little is learned, and that so badly. (Nietzsche, 1880)

"Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught."

Oscar Wilde

What is the purpose of industrial education? To fill the young of the species with knowledge and awaken their intelligence? Nothing could be further from the truth. The aim is simply to reduce as many individuals as possible to the same safe level, to breed and train a standardized citizenry, to put down dissent and originality. That is its aim in the United States and that is its aim everywhere else.

– H. L. Mencken

It is our American habit, if we find the foundations of our educational structure unsatisfactory, to add another story or a wing.

– John Dewey

. Schools have not necessarily much to do with education... they are mainly institutions of control where certain basic habits must be inculcated in the young. Education is quite different and has little place in school.

– Winston Churchill



"I never let my schooling interfere with my education."

"All schools, all colleges, have two great functions: to confer, and to conceal valuable knowledge."

"Many public-school children seem to know only two dates - 1492 and 4th of July, and as a rule, they don't know what happened on either occasion."

Quotes of Mark Twain

Then we can hear from diverse modern voices from the worlds of education, business and politics:

Nothing bothers me more than when people criticize my criticism of school by telling me that schools are not just places to learn maths and spelling, they are places where children learn a vaguely defined thing called socialization. I know. I think schools generally do an effective and terribly damaging job of teaching children to be infantile, dependent, intellectually dishonest, passive and disrespectful to their own developmental capacities."

– Seymour Papert

"Our large schools are organized like a factory of the late 19th century: top down, command control management, a system designed to stifle creativity and independent judgment."

– David T Kearns, CEO Xerox



And then finally we can hear from Illich himself on the role of compulsory schooling in modern society:

School is the advertising agency which makes you believe that you need the society as it is.”

— Ivan Illich

School has become the world religion of a modernized proletariat, and makes futile promises of salvation to the poor of the technological age.”

— Ivan Illich, Deschooling Society

Schools are designed on the assumption that there is a secret to everything in life; that the quality of life depends on knowing that secret; that secrets can be known only in orderly successions; and that only teachers can properly reveal these secrets. An individual with a schooled mind conceives of the world as a pyramid of classified packages accessible only to those who carry the proper tags.”

— Ivan Illich, Deschooling Society



The machine-like behavior of people chained to electronics constitutes a degradation of their well-being and of their dignity which, for most people in the long run, becomes intolerable. Observations of the sickening effect of programmed environments show that people in them become indolent, impotent, narcissistic and apolitical. The political process breaks down because people cease to be able to govern themselves; they demand to be managed.”

— Ivan Illich, *In the Mirror of the Past: Lectures and Adresses, 1978-1990*

Note that this last quote came before the advent of personal computers, cell phones and other e-devices, imagine his horror seeing today’s world.

And, then finally

Schools themselves pervert the natural inclination to grow and learn into the demand for instruction.”

— Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*





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**The true miracle of modern medicine is diabolical. It consists of making not only individuals but whole populations survive on inhumanly low levels of personal health.**

**~ Ivan Illich**

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